

**HUGHES**

**Application No. 09/623,977**

**January 5, 2004**

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:**

Page 1, before line 3, insert the following as a separate paragraph:

b1 --BACKGROUND--; and

before line 19, insert the following as a separate paragraph:

b2 --Brief Description of the Invention--.

Page 2, before line 4, insert the following as a separate paragraph:

b3 --Brief Description of the Drawings--.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 4, as follows:

Exemplary embodiments of the invention will now be described, by way of example, with reference to the drawings, in which:

Figure 1 illustrates a conventional teleconference system;

Figure 2 illustrates a spatial audio teleconference system according to one embodiment of the invention;

b4 Figure 3 illustrates a N-channel speech decoder used in the embodiment of Figure 2;

Figure 4 illustrates a N-channel audio spatialiser used in the embodiment of Figure 2;

Figure 5 illustrates a second embodiment of the invention;

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Figure 6 illustrates how the invention may be used with conventional PSTN channels;


Figure 7 illustrates a variant of the invention for use with a video conference system;

Figure 8 illustrates a voice switched concentrator which may be used in the embodiments of the invention; and

Figures 9, 10 and 11 illustrate various echo cancellation techniques.

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Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 2, line 21, as follows:

 In the conventional system illustrated in Figure 1 the conference bridge located in the exchange equipment 100 receives signals from the various customers' terminal equipments 10, (20, 30 not shown) in response to sounds detected by respective microphones 11, 21, 31 etc. These signals are transmitted over the telephone network (1), to the exchange 100 at which the bridge is established. Generally the signals will travel by way of a local exchange (not shown) in which the analogue signals are converted to digital form, usually employing linear ~~companding~~ combining such as "A law" (as used for example in Europe) or "mu-law" (as used for example in the United States of America) for onward transmission to the bridge exchange 100. On arrival at the bridge exchange 100, the bridge passes each incoming signal 11, 21, 31 through a respective digital converter 111, 112, 113 to convert them from A Law to linear digital signals, and then passes the linear signals to a digital combiner 120 to generate a

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combined signal. This combined signal is re-converted to A law in a further digital converter 110, and the resulting signal transmitted over the telephone network (2) to each terminal equipment 10, (20, 30) for conversion to sound in respective loudspeakers 12, 22, 32 etc. In this way the exchange equipment 100 acts as a "bridge" to allow one or more terminal equipments 30 to connect into a simple two-way connection between terminal equipments 10, 20.

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